## AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace paragraph [0005] with the paragraph below:

[0005] Today's firmware architectures include provisions for extending BIOS functionality beyond that provided by the BIOS code stored in a platform's BIOS device (*e.g.*, flash memory). More particularly, the Extensible Firmware Interface (EFI) (specifications and examples of which may be found at http://developer.intel.com/technology/efi) is a public industry specification that describes an abstract programmatic interface between platform firmware and shrink-wrap operation systems or other custom application environments. The EFI framework include provisions for extending BIOS functionality beyond that provided by the BIOS code stored in a platform's BIOS device (*e.g.*, flash memory). EFI enables firmware, in the form of firmware modules and drivers, to be loaded from a variety of different resources, including primary and secondary flash devices, option ROMs, various persistent storage devices (*e.g.*, hard disks, CD ROMs, *etc.*), and even over computer networks.

Please replace paragraph [0074] with the paragraph below:

[0074] In the foregoing embodiments, variables are first encrypted and then compressed. This is merely an exemplary ordering, as variables could be first compressed and then encrypted. In one embodiment, a symmetric encryption scheme, such as defined by the Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) agency's federal information processing standard (FIPS) 197 (http:/csrc.nist.gov/publications/fips/fips197/fips-197.pdf).